

brush it off, but they would ask: Senator Dole, what about this and what about that? And all the way through, he was great, a sense of humor, self-deprecating. Everybody on that plane realized this was a true hero of that war.

I will speak more later on, but he was a good friend.

I was honored to join Senator Pat Roberts to speak about Senator Dole when he received the Congressional Gold Medal. I told him what an honor it was that he asked me to speak. Certainly, when I think back on my years here in the Senate, that is one of the highest honors I received, to have this man whom I admired, I liked, was my friend, to ask me to speak for him. I also felt that there were so many others who were probably even far better prepared to speak for him. I felt the honor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING ROBERT J. DOLE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday, our country lost a great statesman, and many in this Chamber lost a dear former colleague.

Senator Bob Dole, who represented Kansas in the Senate for 27 years and who served 3 years as Senate majority leader, passed away yesterday morning at the age of 98.

Throughout his life, Bob Dole redefined and elevated what it meant to be a public servant. He was born not to wealth but in poverty, a son of the Kansas heartland, who grew up beneath the shadow of the Great Depression. As a young man, Bob unblinkingly answered the call to serve by enlisting in the Army during World War II, where he earned two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star.

After his election to the Senate, Senator Dole quickly won the admiration of his colleagues with his candor, his sharp wit, and his penchant for good-natured ribbing, but beneath all that was an unquenchable desire to get things done in this Chamber.

While he frequently sparred with Democrats, some of his greatest achievements were bipartisan endeavors, including his work to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act, legislation to strengthen Social Security, and revamping Federal nutrition programs. Despite rising to the top ranks of his party, Senator Dole always kept close relationships with those on the other side of the aisle.

Senator Dole exemplified the "greatest generation." While I never had the pleasure of serving in the Senate with him, I always admired his steadfast ad-

vocacy for veterans, for Americans with disabilities, and his love for his country.

For the information of all, Senator Dole will lie in state this Thursday, under the Capitol Rotunda, where we will pay tribute to his life and to his legacy.

I thank the Speaker and Leader MCCONNELL in helping make this event's ceremonies possible.

For today, I join all my colleagues in mourning the loss of this great public servant, and I wish all of Senator Dole's family my deepest condolences.

REMEMBERING FRED HIATT

Madam President, on another tragic note, we learned today of the passing of Fred Hiatt, the Washington Post's long-time editorial page editor. He was a titan at the paper—and in journalism—for years. My heart goes out to his family and colleagues on their terrible and sudden loss.

SENATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Now, Madam President, on a different matter, as we begin the first full week of December, there is much that the Senate must attend to before we reach the end of the year.

First, Senate Democrats remain committed to taking up and passing President Biden's Build Back Better Act before Christmas. As I outlined in a letter to my caucus this morning, Senate Democrats have been working furiously to clear the necessary steps to achieve this goal. As we all know, the reconciliation process is not an easy one.

The reason this timeline is so important is that this legislation is about lowering costs for American families. As we enter the winter months, American families deserve a little extra help in affording things like childcare and pre-K. They need help in lowering costs on things like prescription drugs and making healthcare more affordable, and families need to know that critical programs like the child tax credit will continue uninterrupted. This program has already done immense good for millions upon millions of families. Build Back Better will make sure these benefits stay in place.

For these reasons, we are going to continue the process until Build Back Better is signed into law. This is arduous work. It takes time, precision, and a lot of pieces moving together. It has taken months of communication, negotiation, and countless late nights and weekend workdays to bring us to this point.

I want to thank my colleagues, their staff, and the Parliamentarian for dedicating the full measure of their attention and talent toward this endeavor. We are close, and we will keep going until the job is done.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Madam President, on other Senate priorities, as we continue working on Build Back Better, Democrats will simultaneously address other year-end priorities as well. First, we will con-

tinue working, as necessary, to process President Biden's nominations both to the Federal bench and to serve in key posts within his administration.

On that front, today, we will begin consideration of a terrific nominee, Jessica Rosenworcel, tapped by President Biden to serve as Chair of the FCC.

Ms. Rosenworcel has nearly a decade of experience already as an FCC Commissioner and will soon be the first-ever woman confirmed to serve as Chair, breaking another glass ceiling in our government. She has been a fierce advocate for closing the digital divide, for protecting net neutrality, and, when confirmed, Ms. Rosenworcel will oversee critical Federal programs that help low-income Americans secure internet access.

There are other nominees to come this week. Regrettably, if our Republican colleagues continue their holds on various individuals, Senators should prepare for the possibility of late nights and votes on the weekend. The President deserves to have his team, and we will spend whatever time we need to ensure his nominees are confirmed.

Finally, Democrats will also continue addressing other issues before the end of this year. We will keep working on finding a path forward on voting rights legislation, and there are many intense discussions going on in that area. We will also work to address the debt limit and preserve the full faith and credit of the United States. I want to thank Leader MCCONNELL for his cooperation in that regard.

And, this week, we also anticipate that we will be able to reach a final conference agreement on the NDAA. Congress has passed the annual Defense bill without fail for, roughly, 60 years, largely on a bipartisan basis. I expect this year will be no different.

So there is a lot of work to do. It will likely take weekends and late nights to get it done, but we will continue forging ahead on behalf of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

REMEMBERING ROBERT J. DOLE

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I thank the distinguished leader for his words and his statement about our friend Bob Dole. I also agree with him in that we have to stay here and get this work done.

Madam President, as someone who has observed the evolution of relations between the United States and Cuba for nearly 50 years, particularly since I first traveled there in 1999, I find the situation between our two countries today bewildering, tragic, and exasperating.

Bewildering, because senior Administration officials—who have publicly and privately acknowledged that the 60-year policy of unilateral U.S. sanctions, isolation, and threats has failed to achieve any of its objectives and instead has hurt the Cuban people—have